



James J. Buettgen
Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer

JJ Buettgen (pronounced BET-kin) was named Chief Marketing Officer for Darden Restaurants in June 2011. A member of Darden's Operating Team, JJ leads brand growth strategy across the enterprise to help ensure each Darden brand is appropriately positioned and has clearly identified plans in place to drive sustainable growth. This includes providing strategic and brand thought partnership around core issues; identifying cross-brand promotion opportunities; and, increasing standardization and commonality of processes that result in increased efficiency, effectiveness and growth.



Darden is the world's largest full-service restaurant operating company with annual sales of \$7.5 billion. The company owns and operates 1,900 Red Lobster, Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, The Capital Grille, Bahama Breeze and Seasons 52 restaurants in North America, employs approximately 180,000 people and serves more than 400 million meals annually. In 2011, Darden became the first full-service restaurant company ever to be named to the FORTUNE "100 Best Companies to Work For" list.

Previously, JJ served as Senior Vice President of Business Development. In this role, JJ successfully launched important growth initiatives for Darden that included Synergy Restaurants and the company's Middle East expansion. JJ joined Darden in 1994 as Director of Marketing for Olive Garden. He was promoted to Vice President of Marketing for Olive Garden and helped engineer one of the most impressive turnarounds in the restaurant industry by establishing Olive Garden's advertising focus. He was recognized by *Advertising Age* as one of the "Marketing 100" in 1998 for developing the Olive Garden's "Hospitaliano" campaign.

JJ left the company in 1998 to join Hollywood Entertainment Group as Senior Vice President of Marketing for the video retailer. He served as Senior Vice President of Marketing and Sales for Disneyland Resorts from 1999 to 2002, where he helped launch Disney's California Adventure theme park. From 2002 to 2004, he was Senior Vice President of Marketing and Brand Development for Brinker International and President of Big Bowl Asian Kitchen, a casual dining company owned by Brinker.

JJ returned to Darden in 2004 as president of Smokey Bones Barbeque & Grill. JJ began his career with General Mills, where he held various marketing posts from 1989 to 1994.

JJ received a bachelor's degree in Finance from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. He earned an MBA in Marketing Management from the University of California at Los Angeles. JJ is also a former professional hockey player with the National Hockey League's Boston Bruins.